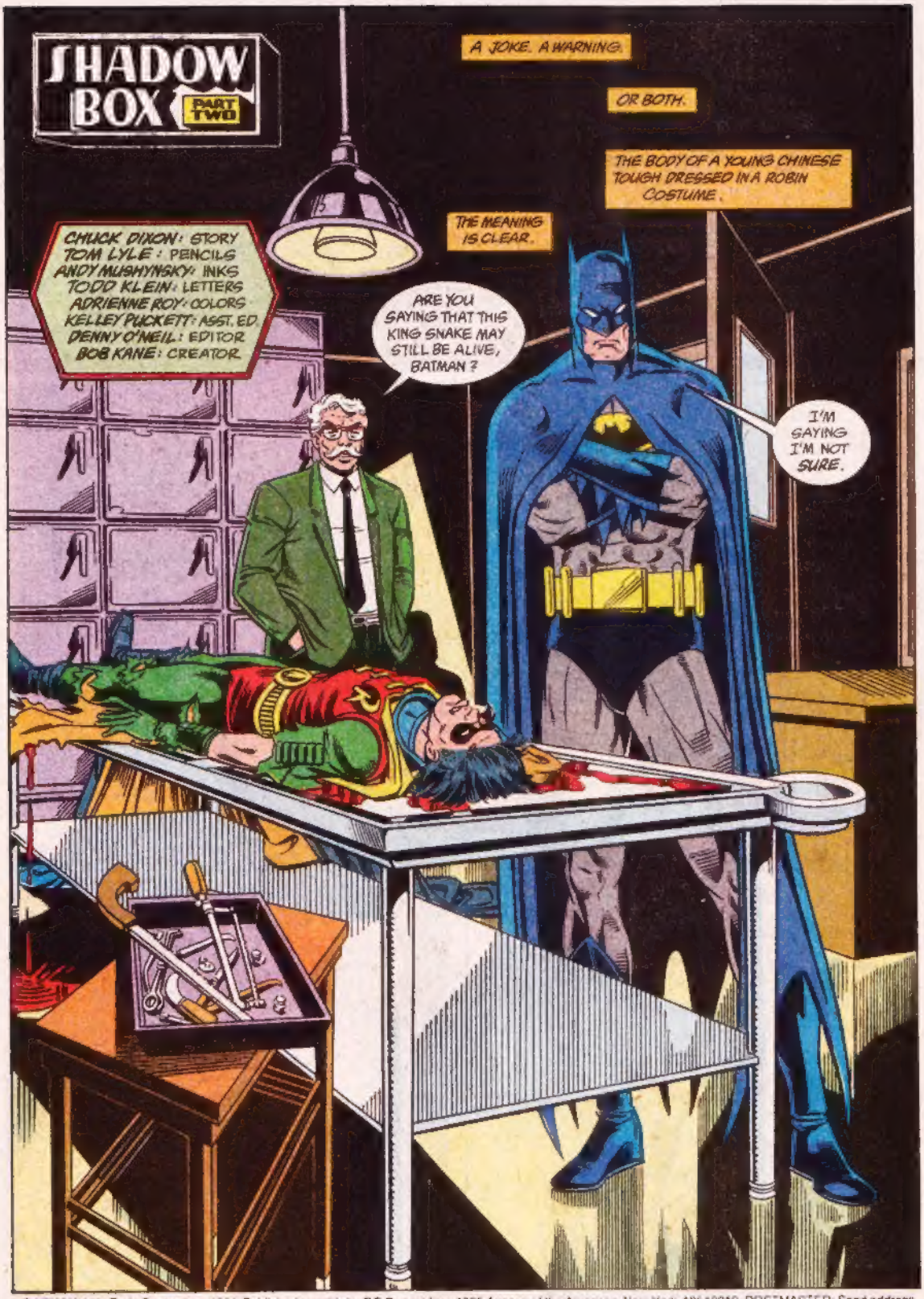
DC
BATMAN
468
US $1.00
CAN $1.25
UK 50p
SHADOW BOX
PART TWO
DIXON • LYLE • MUSHYNSKY
ROUGHER
TONIGHT BATMAN LOOKS DOWN UPON THE BATTLEGROUND THAT IS HIS CITY...


SHADOW BOX
PART TWO
A JOKE. A WARNING.
OR BOTH.
THE BODY OF A YOUNG CHINESE TOUGH DRESSED IN A ROBIN COSTUME.
THE MEANING IS CLEAR.
CHUCK DIXON: STORY
TOM LYLE: PENCILS
ANDY MUSHYNSKY: INKS
TODD KLEIN: LETTERS
ADRIENNE ROY: COLORS
KELLEY PUCKETT: ASST. ED.
DENNY O'NEIL: EDITOR
BOB KANE: CREATOR
ARE YOU SAYING THAT THIS KING SNAKE MAY STILL BE ALIVE, BATMAN?
I'M SAYING I'M NOT SURE.

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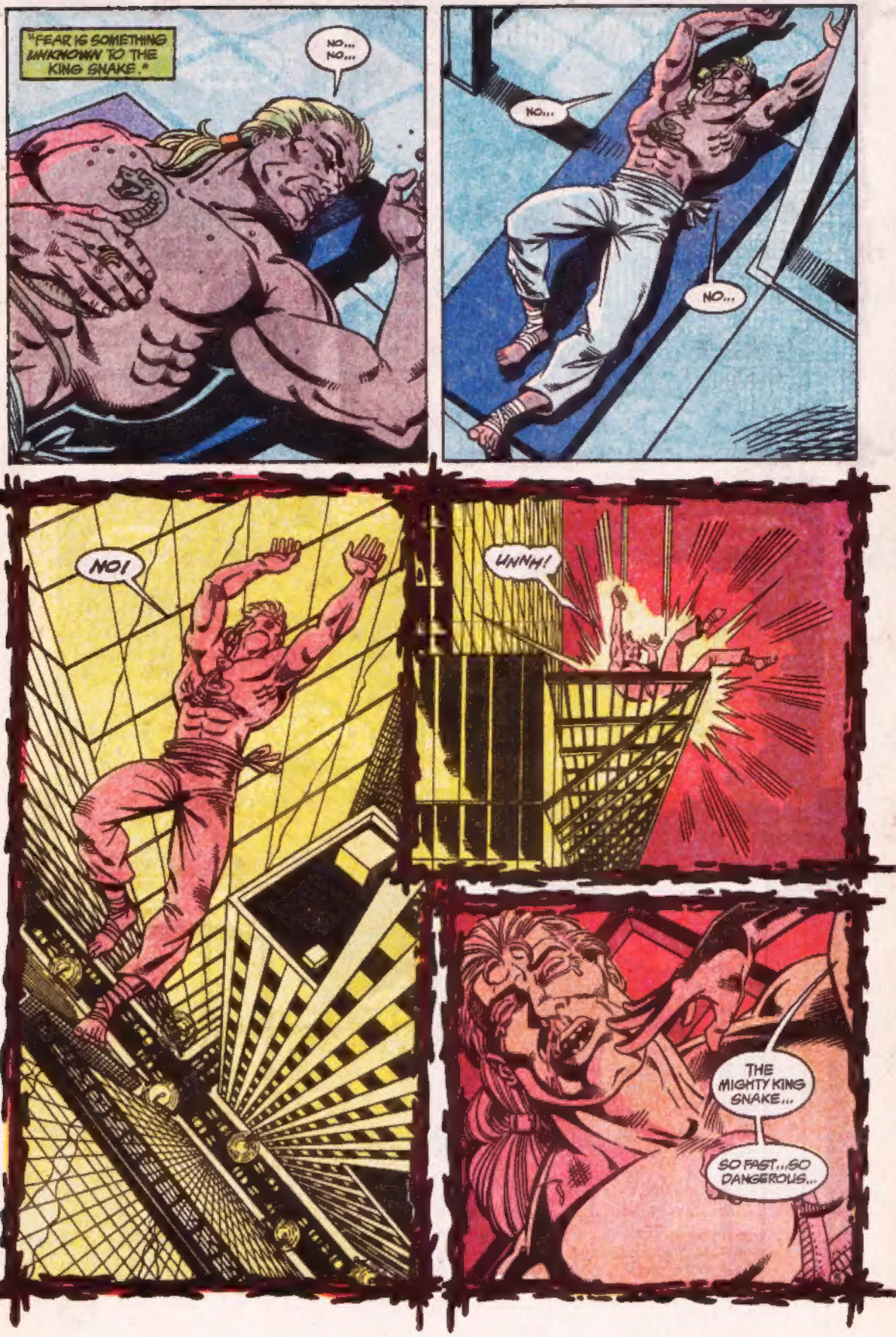
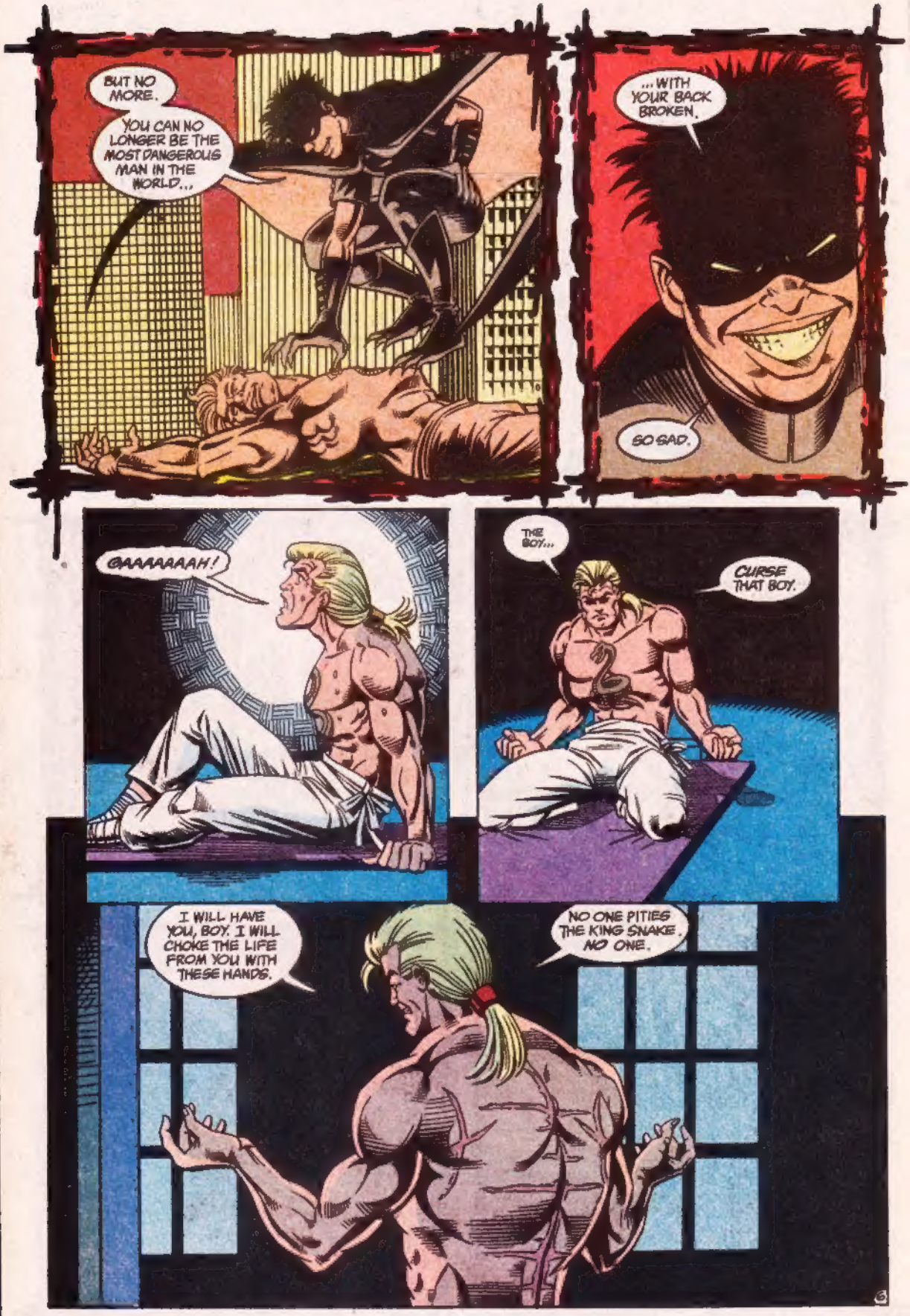
I THOUGHT AT FIRST THAT SOMEONE WAS ONLY BORROWING HIS IDENTITY.
USING HIS PERSONA TO BRING THE UNDERWORLD OF GOTHAM'S CHINATOWN IN LINE.
BUT THIS SICK PRANK IS A PRODUCT OF A MIND POSSESSED BY PSYCHOTIC RAGE.
I DOUBT THAT ANYONE WOULD CARRY AN IMPERSONATION OF SIR EDMUND DORRANCE THIS FAR.
I HAVE MORE THAN A VENDETTA TO WORRY ABOUT.
I HAVE A STREET GANG THAT I KNOW NEXT TO NOTHING ABOUT PROWLING GOTHAM.
ON TOP OF THAT, THEY'RE ARMED WITH STATE-OF-THE-ART ASSAULT WEAPONS. LOTS OF THEM. YOU TELL ME THERE'S A POWER STRUGGLE COMING AMONG THE ASIAN GANGS.
WITH THE TRANSFER OF HONG KONG TO COMMUNIST CHINA ONLY SIX YEARS AWAY, THE CHINESE CRIMELORDS ARE LOOKING TO THESE SHORES.
A BILLION DOLLARS A YEAR COMES OUT OF GOTHAM FOR THE TRIADS IN AGIA.
WE'RE ABOUT TO BE INVADED, JIM.
DEAD OR ALIVE, THE KING SNAKE AND THE GHOST DRAGONS ARE ONLY THE VANGUARD.
2

"IT'S GOING TO BE WAR, AND GOTHAM IS THE PRIZE."
YES!
DO YOU THINK THE OLD HAKKA WILL PAY FOR OUR PROTECTION NOW?
WE WON'T MAKE A DIME IF YOU BLOW DOWN THE WHOLE BLOCK, LYNX.
SUCH PRETTY COLORS...
COME ON, LYNX. I HEAR SIRENS.

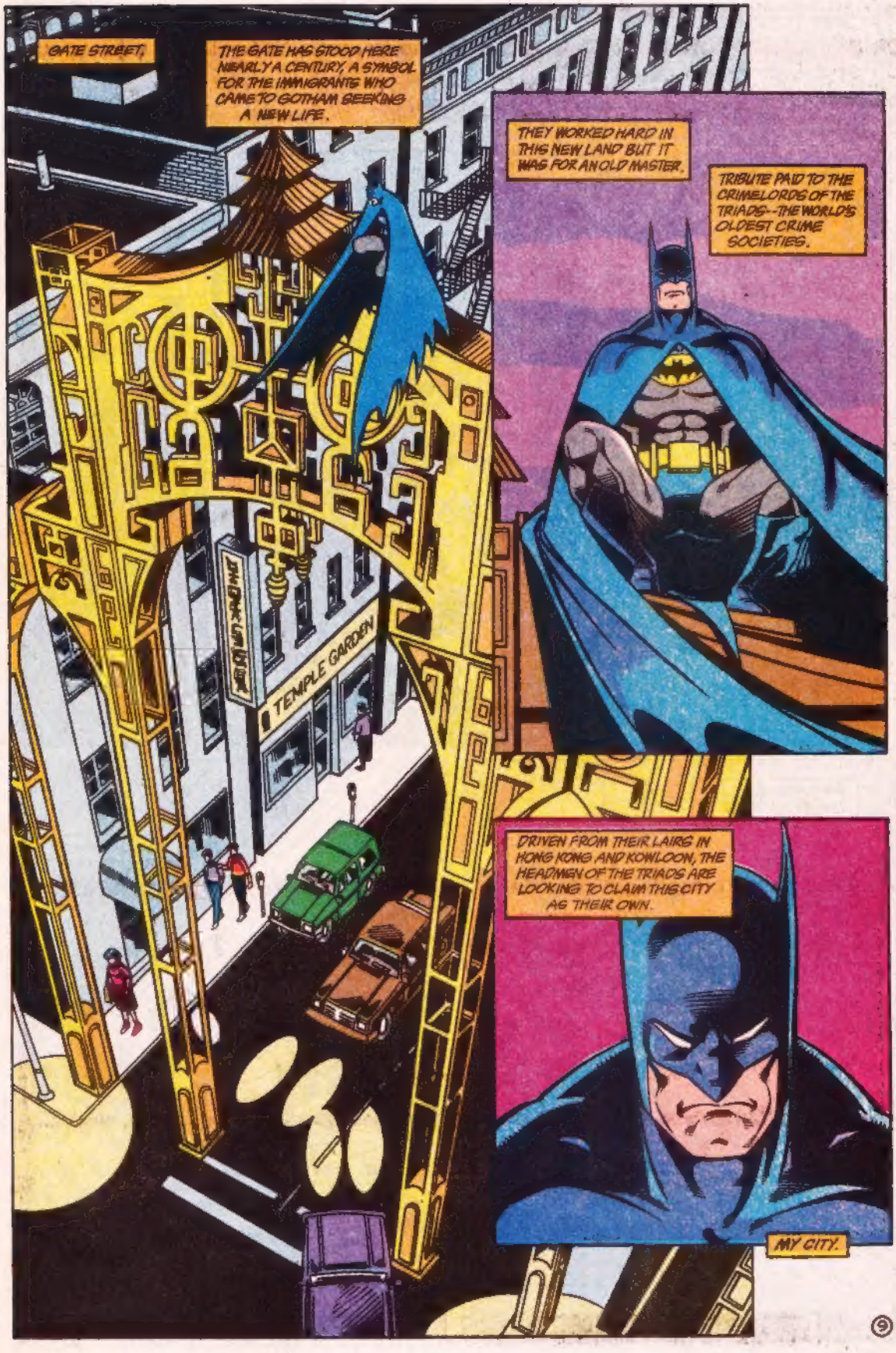
I'M HAVING FUN, LITTLE DRAGON.
DON'T YOU WANT YOUR LYNX TO HAVE FUN?
I CAN SMELL THE FEAR ON YOU!
YOU BOYS HAVE TURNED INTO WUSSIES!
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN WHY WE DO THIS?
THE RUSH! FEEL YOUR PULSE SPEED UP AS THE SIRENS GET CLOSER?
HUH.
BUNCH OF REAL DRAGONS.
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE YOU ALL START WHINING.
I'M GLAD THAT SIR EDMUND IS NOT HERE TO SEE YOU.
4


"FEAR IS SOMETHING UNKNOWN TO THE KING SNAKE."
NO... NO...
NO...
NO...
NO!
UNNH!
THE MIGHTY KING SNAKE...
SO FAST...SO DANGEROUS...


BUT NO MORE.
YOU CAN NO LONGER BE THE MOST DANGEROUS MAN IN THE WORLD...
...WITH YOUR BACK BROKEN.
SO SAD.
@AAAAAAAH!
THE BOY...
CURSE THAT BOY.
I WILL HAVE YOU, BOY. I WILL CHOKE THE LIFE FROM YOU WITH THESE HANDS.
NO ONE PITIES THE KING SNAKE. NO ONE.

UH!
GOOD TAG, TIM.
HUH?
BRUCE! I GUESS MY BRAIN WENT TO WIMBLEDON FOR A MINUTE THERE.
I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU.
I'M CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL-WORK, TIM.
WHAT'S THE PROBLEM? I'VE BEEN KEEPING UP.
THAT'S JUST IT.
I'VE SPOKEN WITH ALFRED AND WE DON'T THINK YOU'RE SPENDING THE TIME WITH YOUR STUDIES THAT YOU SHOULD.
YOU'RE DOING WELL, BUT NOT AS WELL AS YOU COULD WITH A LITTLE MORE APPLICATION.

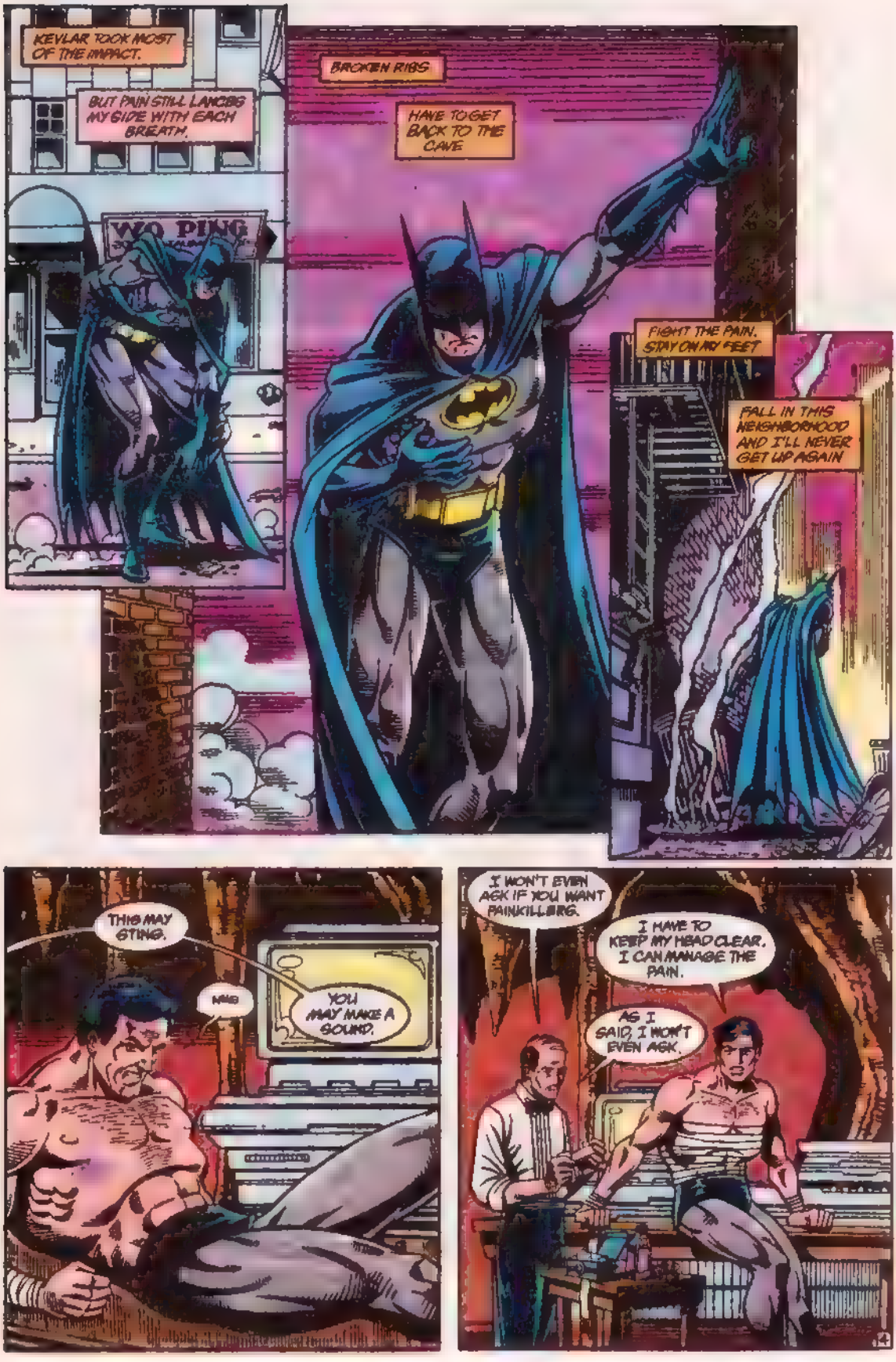
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, BRUCE?
I'M GOING TO GO OUT SOLO THE NEXT FEW NIGHTS. IT WILL GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO CONCENTRATE ON SCHOOLWORK.
BUT...
THERE'S THIS NEW TROUBLE WITH THE GHOST DRAGONS.
YOU CAN'T DO IT ALL BY YOURSELF.
I'M JUST GOING TO MOVE TO TIM.
YOUR EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT TO YOU. WE HAVE TO KEEP THAT AS A PRIORITY.
THERE'S NO OTHER REASON?
NO OTHER REASON.
YEAH...
RIGHT!

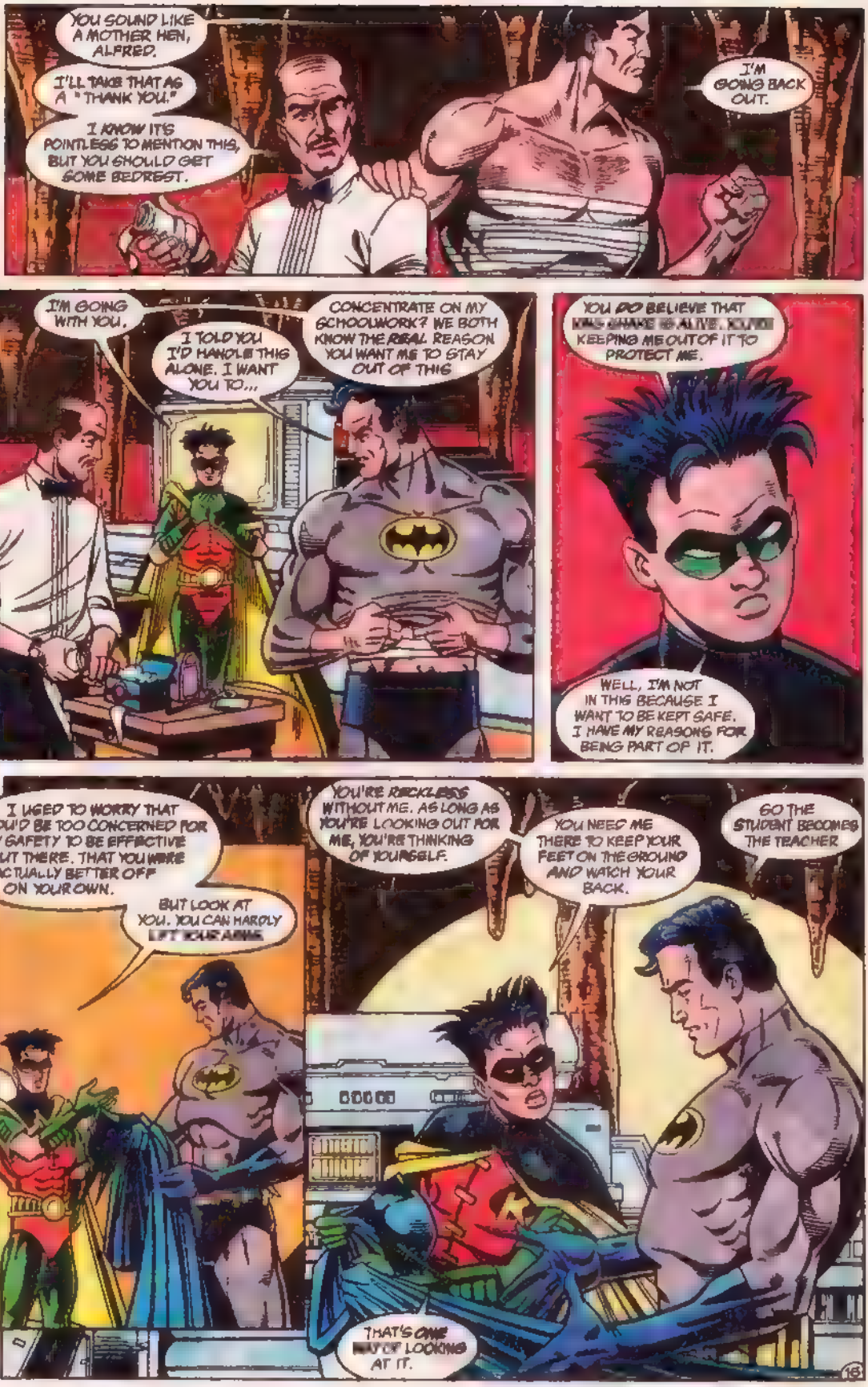

GATE STREET.
THE GATE HAS STOOD HERE NEARLY A CENTURY, A SYMBOL FOR THE IMMIGRANTS WHO CAME TO GOTHAM SEEKING A NEW LIFE.
THEY WORKED HARD IN THIS NEW LAND BUT IT WAS FOR AN OLD MASTER.
TRIBUTE PAID TO THE CRIMELORDS OF THE TRIADS--THE WORLD'S OLDEST CRIME SOCIETIES.
TEMPLE GARDEN
DRIVEN FROM THEIR LAIRS IN HONG KONG AND KOWLOON, THE HEADMEN OF THE TRIADS ARE LOOKING TO CLAIM THIS CITY AS THEIR OWN.
MY CITY.

LOTS OF NEW FACES IN TOWN
I CAN'T KEEP UP WITH THEM.
IT'S AS THOUGH THIS PART OF GOTHAM HAS BECOME STRANGE TO ME.
TING FU GARDEN
I WAS RIGHT TO KEEP TIM OUT OF THIS.
HE'S BEEN SINGLED OUT AS A TARGET
ONE OF MANY
10

I CAN HEAR THEM LAUGHING OVER THE BLAST OF THEIR GUNS.
THEY'RE ON PCP OR SOME OTHER KIND OF DESIGNER DRUG.
UNICORN
I CAN'T GO EASY ON THEM.
HAVE TO TAKE THEM DOWN HARD.
GET AWAY FAST.
ALL I'VE DONE IS SET THESE NEW TOUGHS UP FOR THE DRAGONS.

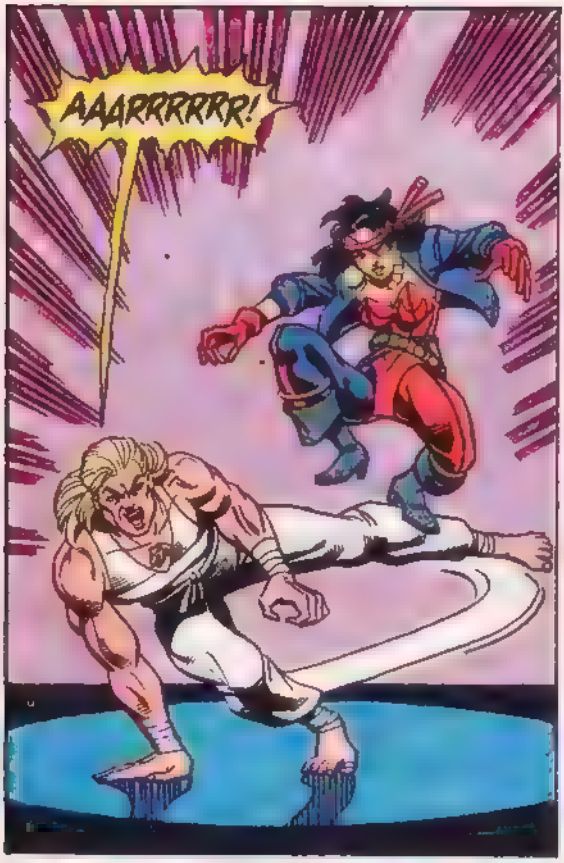
THE GETAWAY
HIT AND RUN ATTACK LIKE THEY OWN THE STREETS
BUT I OWN THE STREETS
I OWN THE NIGHT

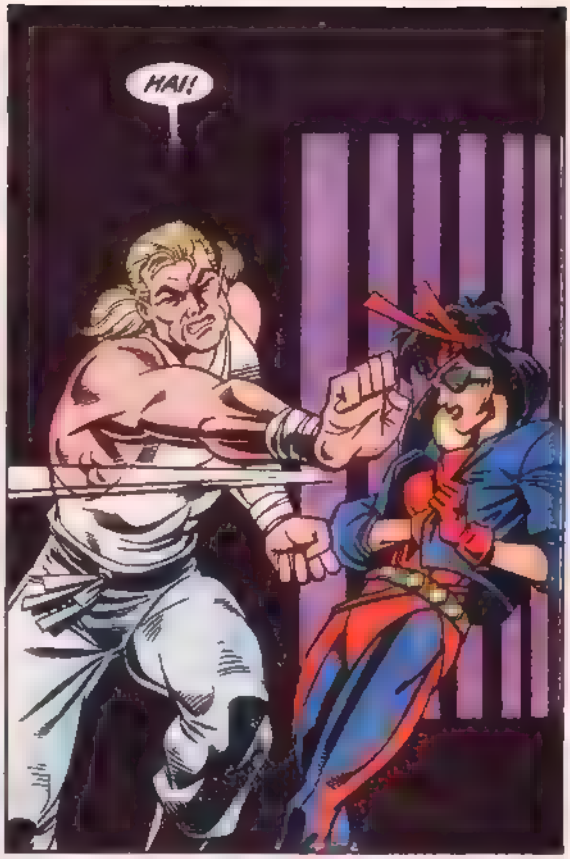

KEVLAR TOOK MOST OF THE IMPACT.
BUT PAIN STILL LANCES MY SIDE WITH EACH BREATH.
WO PING
BROKEN RIBS
HAVE TO GET BACK TO THE CAVE
FIGHT THE PAIN. STAY ON MY FEET
FALL IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD AND I'LL NEVER GET UP AGAIN
THIS MAY STING.
MMG
YOU MAY MAKE A SOUND.
I WON'T EVEN ASK IF YOU WANT PAINKILLERS.
I HAVE TO KEEP MY HEAD CLEAR. I CAN MANAGE THE PAIN.
AS I SAID, I WON'T EVEN ASK.

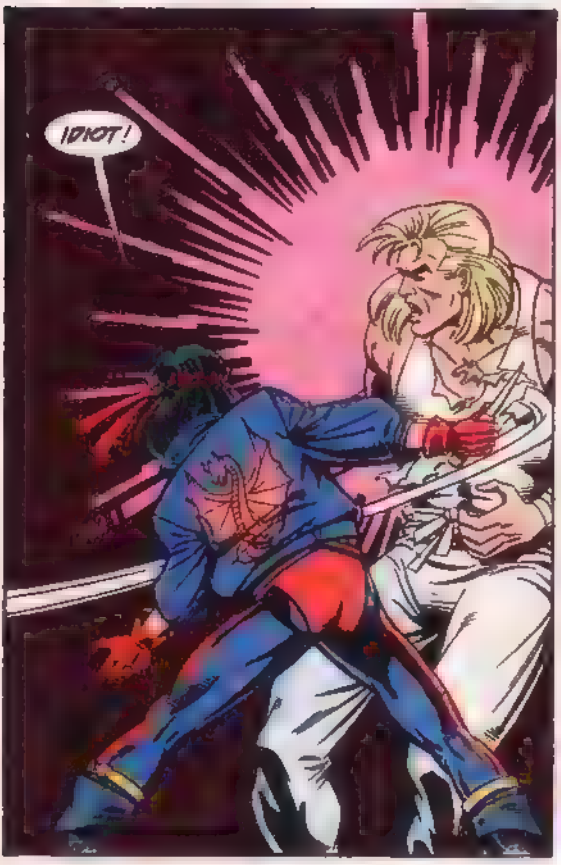

YOU SOUND LIKE A MOTHER HEN, ALFRED.
I'LL TAKE THAT AS A "THANK YOU."
I KNOW IT'S POINTLESS TO MENTION THIS, BUT YOU SHOULD GET SOME BEDREST.
I'M GOING BACK OUT.
I'M GOING WITH YOU.
I TOLD YOU I'D HANDLE THIS ALONE. I WANT YOU TO...
CONCENTRATE ON MY SCHOOLWORK? WE BOTH KNOW THE REAL REASON YOU WANT ME TO STAY OUT OF THIS
YOU DO BELIEVE THAT [redacted] IS ALIVE, YOU'RE KEEPING ME OUT OF IT TO PROTECT ME.
WELL, I'M NOT IN THIS BECAUSE I WANT TO BE KEPT SAFE. I HAVE MY REASONS FOR BEING PART OF IT.
I USED TO WORRY THAT YOU'D BE TOO CONCERNED FOR MY SAFETY TO BE EFFECTIVE OUT THERE. THAT YOU WERE ACTUALLY BETTER OFF ON YOUR OWN.
BUT LOOK AT YOU. YOU CAN HARDLY [redacted] YOUR ARMS.
YOU'RE RECKLESS WITHOUT ME. AS LONG AS YOU'RE LOOKING OUT FOR ME, YOU'RE THINKING OF YOURSELF.
YOU NEED ME THERE TO KEEP YOUR FEET ON THE GROUND AND WATCH YOUR BACK.
SO THE STUDENT BECOMES THE TEACHER
THAT'S ONE [redacted] OF LOOKING AT IT.

ROBIN, I'M STILL NOT CERTAIN THAT SIR EDMUND [redacted] IS ALIVE
BUT SOMEONE HAS SINGLED YOU OUT FOR VENGEANCE. MAYBE IT'S LYNX. MAYBE SOMEONE WE DON'T KNOW
THE BEST STRATEGY IS TO KEEP YOU OUT OF THIS UNTIL WE KNOW MORE ABOUT WHAT'S GOING ON.
I'M ASKING YOU TO TRUST ME ON THIS
ALL RIGHT. I TRUST YOUR JUDGMENT. BUT YOU HAVE TO PROMISE ME SOMETHING.
AND THAT IS?
YOU'LL LISTEN TO ALFRED AND AT LEAST CALL IT A NIGHT AND GIVE YOURSELF A CHANCE TO HEAL
DEAL
GORDON CAN HOLD THE LINE FOR ONE NIGHT
WELL PLAYED, ROBIN.
HE REALLY DOES CARRY THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD ON HIS SHOULDERS.
NOT ALONE
HE COULD NEVER BEAR THE BURDEN WITHOUT US.
15

YOU SAY THAT BATMAN HAS SOUGHT TO INTERFERE AGAIN?
HE JUMPED IN BETWEEN THE GHOST DRAGONS AND SOME LOWLIFES FROM THE STEEL UNICORN GANG
THEY RUN FOR THE PO SYNDICATE. WAS THE BOY WITH BATMAN?
NO SIGN OF HIM. YOU MUST HAVE SPOOKED THEM WITH JOHNNY YUME'S CARCASS DRESSED LIKE THE BOY WONDER
GO. I HAVE TO FACE THE BATMAN BEFORE I MAY GET MY HANDS ON THE BOY.
HE'S GOOD BUT NOT A KILLER. HE'S NO MATCH FOR ME
THIS IS MORE THAN JUST A PAIR OF COSTUMED LAWMEN. WE'RE GETTING READY FOR A WAR WITH THE OLD GANGS, SIR SOMLIND
YOU CAN'T GET ALL EATEN UP WITH HATE FOR THIS KID. YOU'RE ABOUT TO LOSE ALL WE WORKED FOR.
WE TAKE CARE OF THE BOY AND THE REST FOLLOWS. ROBIN DIES BY MY HAND AND THEN WE GO ON.
HOLD ON HERE. THIS ISN'T ABOUT HATRED IS IT?
YOU DON'T HATE ROBIN
NOT SO MUCH AS YOU FEAR HIM.
17


AAARRRRRR!


HAI!


IDIOT!

I HATE HIM TOO! HE SHAMED ME, MADE ME LOOK A FOOL!
THEN..
THEN HELP ME FIND HIM AND KILL HIM. BE THE EYES THAT LEAD ME TO HIM

YOU DON'T CATCH A BIRD BY CHASING IT
YOU SET A SNARE FOR IT
A CASINO, COMMISSIONER. LESS THAN A QUARTER MILE FROM CITY HALL.
ROOM FOR TWO HUNDRED GAMBLERS DOWN HERE
SOMEONE KNEW ABOUT THIS. THERE'S GOING TO BE A SHAKEOUT IN THE DEPARTMENT WHEN THIS IS OVER
THREE BOMBINGS AND THAT DRIVE-BY SHOOTING LAST NIGHT. NOW THIS
HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?
IT'S CHINATOWN, COMMISSIONER NOBODY SAW ANYTHING SLEPT THROUGH THE WHOLE FIREWORKS SHOW
IT'S PART OF THE WAR, THEN.
SO MUCH WE'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND. IT'S AS IF OUR AUTHORITY ENDS AT GATE STREET
YOU! ARE YOU IN CHARGE HERE?
19

I'M POLICE COMMISSIONER GORDON AND...
BENJAMIN MINH. I OWN THIS BUILDING, WHAT'S LEFT OF IT.
WHY CAN'T YOU PROTECT US?
DO YOU KNOW WHO MIGHT HAVE DONE THIS?
I HAVE NO IDEA WHY DON'T YOU FIND OUT?
I SUPPOSE YOU DIDN'T KNOW THAT A CASINO WAS BEING RUN IN YOUR BASEMENT?
I PAY FOR PROTECTION FROM THE WOLF PACKS, FROM THE POLICE!
WELL, YOU DON'T PAY ME. ARREST MR MINH, DETECTIVE
HUH?
BOOK HIM, DETECTIVE MATHERS. CRIMINAL CONSPIRACY, RACKETEERING.
TAKE HIM DOWNTOWN AND SEE IF HE CAN REMEMBER ANY NAMES.
ANYBODY WANTS ME, I'LL BE AT HOME
I'LL BE TRYING TO FORGET ABOUT ALL THIS.
20

COMMISSIONER?
WHO'S THERE?
WHO'S THERE?
ANSWER ME!
WHAT'S THIS?
DEAR GOD...

THE MEANING IS PLAIN, BATMAN.
HAS ANYONE BUT YOU SEEN THIS?
NO ONE. AND I DIDN'T TOUCH IT WITH MY HANDS.
THANKS, JIM. THIS IS TOO SIMPLE. THERE'S MORE HERE THAN JUST ANOTHER WARNING.
THIS BIRD HAS SOMETHING TO TELL ME.
I'LL TAKE THIS TO ANALYZE.
I'LL LET YOU KNOW WHAT I FIND.
IF YOU NEED MY HELP IN ANY WAY...
THANKS, JIM.
BUT THIS ONE IS ALL MINE. HE WANTS TO GET AT ROBIN. WANTS REVENGE ON HIM.
HE'LL HAVE TO STEP OVER MY CORPSE FIRST.

CONTINUED--!

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To help catch up with our backlog of letters, we'll be looking at the responses to issues #460 and #461, the "Sisters in Arms" two-parter.

Dear Editor,

About BATMAN #460: Thank you for giving Catwoman back her sexy, long hair.

John Rohlfing
13802 Gunther Street
Garden Grove, CA 92643

Uhh...right. Sure, John.

* * * * *

Dear Denny, and to all those people who make my favorite character come to life,

BATMAN #460 was a real shocker! It had many surprise guests. It's been a while since Catwoman and Joe Potato appeared with Batman. What I'm really happy about is that Commissioner Gordon is all right. I really got scared when he had that heart attack last issue. There's one thing that puzzles me. After all these years Sarah Essen comes back into Gordon's life for no reason at all. I'm not saying she's after something, it's just that she falls in love with him so suddenly and quickly. I don't know. Maybe it's me. I have a tendency for getting suspicious too quickly. Before I sign off I have two questions for you: 1) What is the next graphic novel coming up, and 2) Will Neal Adams ever do another Batman story? Until next time, make mine...oops. Sorry. Wrong company.

Sincerely yours
and always a Batman fan,
Carlos Ramos
5 Minerva Place
Bronx, NY 10468

As to your questions:

1) Our next graphic novel is HOLY TERROR by writer Alan Brennert and artist Norm Breyfogle. Norm has just gone over the edge with this one—it's breathtaking.

2) That's up to Neal.

* * * * *

Dear Denny,

I always enjoy seeing Catwoman, since it shows that I'm not the only one with an enormous love for the feline races of our world. BATMAN #460 was a very enjoyable tale, though, with or without our favorite feline femme fatale.

With Selina back in the picture, it's nice once again to see an effort being made to highlight more female characters in this book. The only problem here seems to be Vicki, whose character still seems just a bit one-dimensional. All she seems capable of, so far, is taking pictures and railing against Bruce whenever he seems concerned for her safety.

Another nice touch that bears noting: Batman's method of swinging through the night. Finally, a semi-"realistic" portrayal of what I thought to be an almost impossible feat. Just how could Batman swing, unhook, toss and secure another line, swing once more and repeat the entire process again, and still hope to actually catch someone? The method depicted here was great, and congratulations to whoever came up with it.

To end, it's nice to see Selina's hair long again. The semi-Sinead O'Connor look just didn't suit her.

Sean Twist
216-500 Springbank Drive
London, Ontario N6J 4G6
CANADA

To give credit where it's due, Sean, Norm Breyfogle came up with the idea for that grappling hook thingie and gave Selina her flowing locks back. What a great guy, huh?

* * * * *

Dear Denny and Kelley,

Y'know, hanging around with Superman all that time must be affecting old Bruce Wayne. In BATMAN #460, he came over as being almost human. The scenes with Bruce and Vicki are certainly a lot warmer of late; it seems to me that it's no longer just part of the playboy act that is making Bruce hang out with Ms. Vale...but then, I'm just a hopeless romantic.

Norm Breyfogle...Catwoman's hair is long again! She's also looking very cat-like. The panel layout becomes more imaginative month after month...and no matter how I try, it's impossible to comment on your art without lapsing into letterhack superlatives, which I really am trying to avoid these days.

Ho hum, suppose I better go feed my cat Boris...

Rock and Roll,
Rol Hirst
Rushgrove Farm
Holt Head, Slaithwaite
Huddersfield, W. Yorks HD7 5TY
ENGLAND

* * * * *

Hey, Kelley—

Re: BATMAN #460

Everyone knows I've never been a proponent of or for Norm Breyfogle's visuals, but I really had no major problems with the artistic side of the new "Sisters in Arms" story. Rather, I'm very impressed with the addition of inker Tim Sale over Breyfogle. Tim's an excellent artist on his own, and his work over Norm's is already paying dividends. I hope he'll be sticking around for a while.

Also, I'm glad that Alan has chosen to bring Catwoman back into the midst of things. Hers has always been one of the most interesting aspects of the Batman mythos, and this new storyline involving Selina and some of the ancient Egyptian mythological contrasts and comparisons to Bast looks to prove quite informative as to the state of Selina's mental point(s) of reference nowadays.

Later.

Uncle Elvis
17659 Dawson Road
Dawson Springs, KY 42408

God knows I love ya, Unc, but I have no idea what that last sentence means.

* * * * *

Dear Bat-Cats,

At long last, the Catwoman is back! And with a major storyline in the Batman title, yet! This is especially exciting in view of the emphasis placed on Batman's male archenemies lately. It's great to see that Selina's recent escapade with the Catman must've summoned enough fan support to warrant her return. (Don't think her appearance in LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT went unnoticed, either!) This opening chapter with Dr. Perkins daring her to steal that Egyptian statue, and Sarah Essen determined to catch her when she strikes made for an exciting return by our favorite feline femme fatale. Arizona's addition to the boiling pot of events also gives this issue another enticing twist. Here's hoping that Selina enjoys even more popularity in the 1990's than she did in the 1950's!

Norm Breyfogle's pencils make Selina the sleek creature of the night she should be. He manages to capture her catlike movements like no other artist. Tim Sale brought this out with his inks, and the result is a Catwoman that has never looked more sensual or more deadly.

As for seeing more of the Batman's female foes, I understand that Poison Ivy is still at large, and I wouldn't mind seeing a return for the Mime, also.

Sincerely,
Neil Ahlquist
Minneapolis, MN

* * * * *

Dear Denny,

BATMAN #460-461 was great! The fight scene between Catwoman and Sergeant Essen on pages 16 and 17 was awesome!! I'm readily awaiting for Tim to go on a case with Batman soon. Grant, Breyfogle, and Mitchell are proving to be the best DC team to come down the tubes in a long time. Keep the action comin'!

Mike Spec
1117 Chevelly Court
Denton, TX 76201

* * * * *

Hey, Bat-dudes—

Re: BATMAN #461

"Once upon a time, there were three women..."

Were there ever! Woooh!

Freddie Jaimeson
Montreal, Quebec
CANADA

* * * * *

Greetings, Creative Team,

The second part of the story did not disappoint me. With Vicki Vale and Sergeant Essen as cast members, Batman has one of the strongest female viewpoints of any book. I enjoy these characters because they are well-written and interesting people who happen to be women. Keep up the great work.

Keep Hope Alive,
Jesse W. Jackson
3109 Brockbank
Irving, TX 75062

* * * * *

Mr. O'Neil,

BATMAN #461

The cover shot. Page 3, last panel. Page 7, panel 5. Page 8, last panel. Page 21, panel 3.

Does this Breyfogle have it or what?

A really impressed dude,
K. Michael Williams
58-03 Calloway Street
Rego Park, NY 11368

He's got it, all right. Let's just hope he doesn't give it to us. Ha ha ha!

P.S. Please, no "As long as he doesn't give it to us" zingers. Gracias.

Whoops. Sorry, K.

* * * * *

Dear Denny and Kelley,

Last issue, "Sisters in Arms" seemed like it was going to be a great two-parter. After reading "Ladies' Night" I have to change my mind. Since when does a criminal succeed in stealing something in Gotham without Batman stopping them? Catwoman shouldn't have gotten away with that Karnak Cat. Selina's been working out since last we saw her. I don't think the Catwoman of the past could pull off the stunt on page 15. I didn't think Selina was smart enough to come up with some kind of cat-attracting device.

Delmo (The Saint) Walters Jr.
1299 Grand Concourse
Bronx, NY 10452

* * * * *

Dear Denny,

I don't know—there's something about Batman that inherently makes even his supporting cast more interesting. Essen, Vale and Catwoman all have much more appeal than most of the super-powered heroes that populate the universes of comics.

Given this, their tripartite starring roles in BATMAN #461 were bound to produce a superior comic, and so it proved. Tongue occasionally in cheek, this was both entertaining and an exciting crime story; the title of "Detective" doesn't only apply to Batman himself, but to all three women in this case, and their eventual formulation of a team, albeit only out of dire necessity, was a fitting route to a successful conclusion to the case.

Let us not forget the other star of the book, a man fully deserving of his own Prestige Format miniseries: Joe Potato. Just think of all the guest stars he could call on!

Norm's art, by the way, was as good as ever, but the design of the cover was something special.

Take care,
Malcolm Bourne
2 & 4 Bye Road
Shuttleworth, Ramsbottom
Bury, Lancashire BL0 0HH
ENGLAND

* * * * *

NEXT ISSUE: It's Batman vs. King Snake in mortal combat as gang war rages through Gotham and Robin battles Lynx! Be here in two weeks for the dramatic conclusion of "Shadow Box" by Chuck Dixon, Tom Lyle, and Scott Hanna.

—Kelley Puckett
and there still ain't no half-steppin'

From the Den

Last year, my summer comics convention schedule was minimal. I stayed pretty close to home. This year, though—off we go into any number of wild blue yonders.

Somewhere, Norman Mailer wrote that travel is never casual. At the time I read that, I thought, *Hey, Mr. Mailer, not true. I'm the kind of ramblin' dude who'll amble off to, say, California on an hour's notice.* (Which I did. Once. Adventurously but not intelligently. Possibly because I thought I was the kind of dude who did things like that.)

Now, maybe thousands of journeys later, I tend to agree with Mr. Mailer. He was probably referring to the psychic upheaval and loss of bearing involved in going some distance. I'm uneasy traveling for more prosaic reasons involving maniac cabbies, lost luggage, missed connections leading to long waits in strange airports, being routed to a destination hundreds of miles from where you absolutely have to be because of bad weather and hotel clerks who look down about a mile of nose while telling you that, no, there is no reservation in your name and, no, there is no mistake.

Still, as I prepare for a summer that will involve at least five long trips, I find myself willing to hope for the best. After all, we've survived disasters before and can probably survive them again. And at the end of the flight we might meet the person who becomes our best friend. Or eat a spectacular meal. Or see something beautiful. Or get a good idea. Or hear a bar of music that *gives* us jazz, once and for all.

Or, if none of that happens, at least travel makes us appreciate the years when we stay at home.

Denny